Retaining Moodle

Moodle is not going away! Our Moodle Host, Moodlerooms, will no longer support our current version of Moodle as of December 31, 2013. This Summer, all Moodle courses will be upgraded to a more current version of Moodle to better serve our teachers and students. This change is necessary and will move us in a positive direction. By implementing this conversion in the Summer we will avoid disruptions in the teaching and learning environment. Moodle has upgraded multiple times since we implemented this Learning Management System (LMS) into our county. We have kept our current version of Moodle because 1.9 offered the best assortment of activities and resources for students and teachers to use in conjunction with classroom instruction. With this conversion Moodlerooms will automatically back up and convert courses over the Summer for all staff members. This upgrade contains additional features, some of which are referenced below:

Drag & Drop Upload: This easily places files into your Moodle course.
Adaptive Release: Pending data results, students can be assigned specific tasks for enrichment and/or remediation purposes.
Duplicate: Quick re-creation of existing activities and resources.
Content Completion Checkmarks: Allows teachers and students to track progress of tasks.

Technology Services will continue to keep teachers informed of updates to Moodle including subsequent timelines for the conversion. Moodle Administrators and Instructional Technology Facilitators will assist teachers as we move forward in the conversion process.

⊙ IT TIP OF THE MONTH

Pinning a Program to the Taskbar
For easy access to your frequently used programs, consider pinning them to the taskbar. To do this, simply follow these steps:
1. Open the program and take note that its corresponding icon will appear in the taskbar (at the bottom of the screen).
2. Right click on the icon in the taskbar.
3. Click on Pin this program to taskbar.
You will now have the ability to open this program from the taskbar for future use.
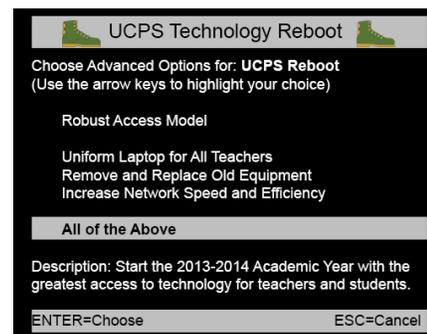
UCPS Technology Reboot

The January issue of IT Matters referenced the Technology Reboot that will occur for the 2013-2014 school year. The logic behind this technology overhaul is multi-faceted. Schools throughout Union County have varying technology and the reboot will ensure uniformity amongst teacher machines. This will increase speeds of software deployment and also allows Technology Services to provide consistency with professional development and tutorials for teachers.

The Technology Reboot is planned to outfit the schools with newer technology. Any device that is 5 years or older will be removed and replaced with newer equipment. The elimination of outdated equipment and rogue devices increases the efficiency of the network and provides increased access for both teachers and students.

Union County's current access model provides students and teachers in grades 6-9 with a county issued laptop in conjunction with the 1:1 initiative. As we move forward we will equip all teachers with a county issued laptop and students at all grade levels will have increased access to devices to enhance their learning. Secondary students will be receiving Chromebooks that will be carried to class and taken home for instructional purposes. Similar to secondary students, elementary students will now have an increased opportunity to participate in a blended learning environment throughout the school day with the use of Dell netbooks.

For additional information about our Technology Reboot please reference the link below.

http://bit.ly/rebootFAQ

UCPS Technology Reboot

Choose Advanced Options for: **UCPS Reboot**
(Use the arrow keys to highlight your choice)

    Robust Access Model

    Uniform Laptop for All Teachers
    Remove and Replace Old Equipment
    Increase Network Speed and Efficiency

    All of the Above

Description: Start the 2013-2014 Academic Year with the greatest access to technology for teachers and students.

ENTER=Choose   ESC=Cancel

Technology Lesson Spotlight

Each month Technology Services continues to feature lessons that teachers are implementing in their classrooms. Lessons are featured at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Take a look below at these innovative lessons that are happening throughout our county!

Elementary School

Melissa Sarcona's first grade students at Antioch Elementary researched Civil Rights by utilizing resources from the Library of Congress Website, LearnNC and Google Apps for Education. Ms. Sarcona shared a Google Presentation with her students and each student selected a slide to edit with historical information. To accommodate students of different learning abilities, the option to work with a partner was offered and additional slides were provided for students who finished early.

Middle School

Digital book trailers flooded Monroe Middle School's Media Center page throughout the month of February. Louise Adams, a 7th grade Communication Skills teacher, partnered with her school's Media Coordinator, Michele Todd, to assist students in creating these products. The lesson utilized Google Forms, Animoto for Education and Moodle. Each digital book trailer needed to include the main character(s), conflict, appropriate music and images. Students planned their storyboards within the Google Apps Suite and then created their culminating products in Animoto for Education. Upon completion, the students were directed to paste the link of their finished product into the designated Moodle forum for others to view.

High School

Sun Valley Globalization teachers Rachel Henry, Michelle VanGaasbeck, and Angie Weed will be taking their students on Global Quests during this Spring semester without ever leaving their classroom! Serena Amer, a student at SVHS, feels that "this project is a great way for students to become more globally aware." Caroline Gomez is in agreement with her classmate and said "I'm really excited to be a part of this service project. It gives us a chance to help teachers show their students how other people around the world are very much the same, yet different, than we are." The Spartans are populating individual websites, through the use of Google Sites, with information about specific countries. These websites will include activities and resources that correlate to Essential Standards and will be accessible to elementary students.

Students at Monroe Middle School viewing book trailer presentations.

Maintenance Window

To provide an optimal experience for UCPS employees, Technology Services will schedule routine Maintenance Windows for services and applications relevant to technology. Maintenance Windows can be scheduled for patches, updates etc. and are not necessarily indicative of anything problematic. Most Maintenance Windows are conducted over the weekend within a 24 hour time frame. UCPS employees are notified in advance which services and applications will be affected prior to their temporary outage. The next scheduled Maintenance Window will take place March 1st-3rd.

Registration Squire

High school students will be using a new tool to register for next year's courses. The Secondary Education Department is rolling out a new program called Registration Squire which was developed by Jon Van de Riet of the Technology Services Application Development team. This program was piloted at Cuthbertson High School and Porter Ridge High School last year and is available to all high schools this year. The tool can be found at https://hsregistration.ucps.k12.nc.us

UDrive

Simplifying processes by introducing new technology greatly increases our workflow on the job. What would normally take an hour to achieve can be reduced to a couple of minutes if the right tool is introduced. U-Drive was designed to permit driving instructors to have all their course information managed online. Listed below are some of the features that come with the application:

· Easily register students for a course.
· Schedule preferred course dates.
· Generate a role sheet displaying all scheduled course dates.
· Record course grades in one click.

Microsoft Home Purchase Update

The January issue of IT Matters included information for purchasing the Microsoft Office Suite for $9.95 for a teacher's home computer. The program code that was provided had expired and you will need to use the code below to receive your copy of Microsoft Office.

1. Go to http://hup.microsoft.com/.
2. Select the country to which you want your order to be shipped to and choose the language for viewing the order website.
3. Enter your corporate e-mail address and insert the following program code **BDBF45290B**
    Note: This program code is assigned to UCPS for our sole use in accessing this site. You may not share this number with anyone outside our organization.
4. Place your order online and it will be shipped to the location you have chosen. Please note that a fulfillment fee will be charged to cover packaging, shipping, and handling costs. Most software is delivered as a download and no additional fee will be charged.

Online Testing

UCPS high schools recently conducted online EOC testing in the subject areas of Algebra I, English II and Biology. The testing sessions were successful due to the collaboration between administration, school-based personnel and Technology Services personnel. Thank you to all involved in this process and for your dedication to this initiative.

IT Matters Archive

The IT Matters Monthly newsletters will now be archived online. Those newsletters can be accessed by scanning the QR code or by clicking the hyperlink below.

IT Matters Archive

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